MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) Keeping in view the provisions of Article 335 of the Constitution, Government took a conscious decision to restrict reservation in promotion by selection to the lowest rung of Group 'A' posts. However, reservation in promotion by non-selection is applicable in all Groups of posts.

(c) and (d) A nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in its judgement dated November 16, 1992 in the Indira Sawhney case held, *inter alia,* that reservation in promotion was not sustainable in terms of Article 16(4) of the Constitution. However, the Supreme Court allowed the then existing policy of reservation in promotion to continue for 5 years i.e. upto 15.11.1997. In order to safeguard the interest of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Article 16 (4A) was incorporated in the Constitution. The object of the Constitutional amendment, as indicated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Bill, 1995 was to continue the then existing policy of reservation in promotion for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Policy of reservation as was then prevalent did not provide for reservation in promotion by selection beyond the lowest rung of Group 'A' posts. The Government issued order on 13.8.1997 with a view to continue reservation in promotion beyond 15.11.1997, which would have otherwise come to an end as per the Supreme Court Judgement in the Indra Sawhney case.

Setting up of Inter-Ministerial Group to assess the impact of removal of quantitative restrictions

*210. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) to assess the likely impact of removal in Quantitative Restrictions on the remaining 715 items by March, 31, 2001 as reported in the Indian Express dated 20th July, 2000 (New Delhi Edition);

(b) if so, what appropriate measures IMG have suggested in this regard; and

(c) what steps Government have taken, till date, to ensure that the domestic industry, including the SSIs, are not adversely affected in any manner in the wake of removal of QRs in the first phase beginning April 1, 2000?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) Government has constituted on 28.07.2000 an Inter-Ministerial Group under the chairmanship of Commerce Secretary, to assess the likely impact of removal of quantitative restrictions and to suggest suitable corrective measures. The Group is expected to make its recommendations before the end of the year.

Government is absolutely determined to ensure through appropriate use of the tariff and other meachanisms that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic industry due to removal of quantitative restrictions on imports. Towards that end, Government has already increased duties on a number of items where a surge in imports was noticed or apprehended. Besides, a Group of Ministers has been entrusted with the task of suggesting ways and means of strengthening the SSI sector.

Provision of low cost sanitation to certain towns of Orissa

*211. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some towns of Orissa have been identified for providing low cost sanitation facilities;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made in the towns of Orissa under the said programme?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c)